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# SLAUGHTER-HOUSE REFORM

IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE  
OPPOSING FORCES

I  
THE PACKING INTERESTS

II  
THE DEFENDERS OF THE HEBREW METHOD

BY

FRANCIS H. ROWLEY

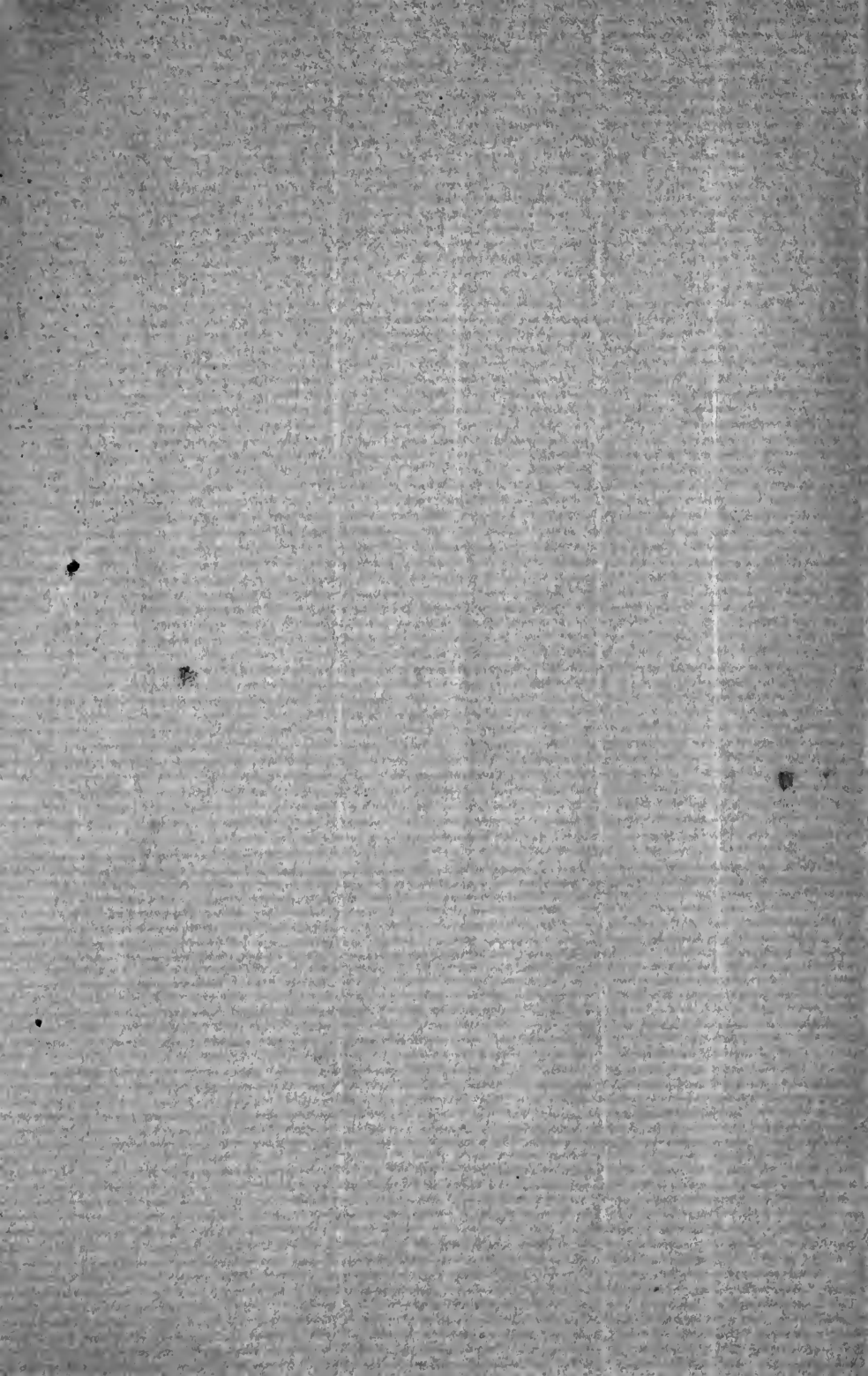
PRESIDENT OF THE MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION  
OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS, AND THE AMERICAN  
HUMANE EDUCATION SOCIETY

A PAMPHLET PREPARED ESPECIALLY FOR THE  
HUMANE SOCIETIES OF THE UNITED STATES

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THE MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION  
OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS  
BOSTON, U. S. A.





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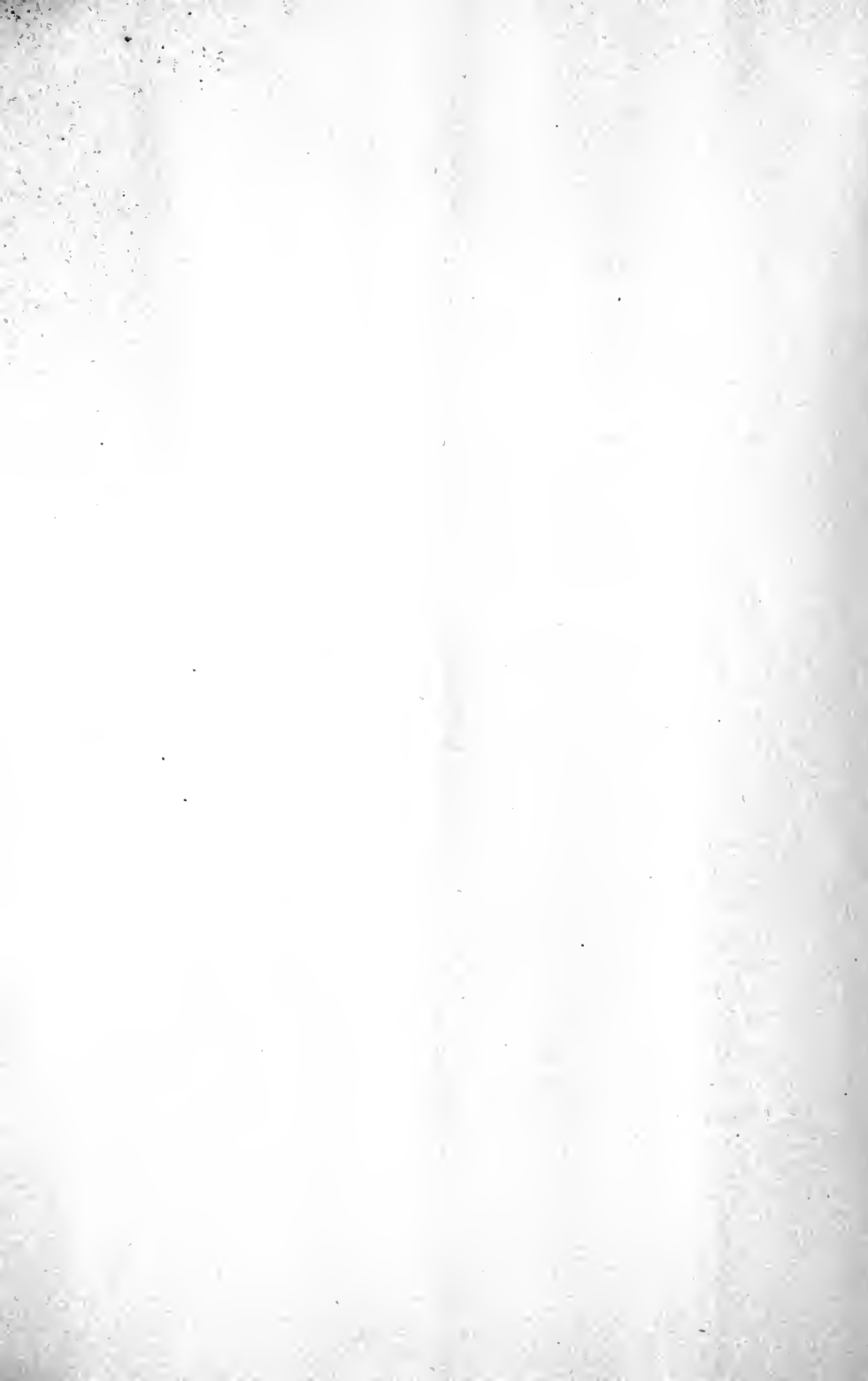
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## SLAUGHTER-HOUSE REFORM IN THE UNITED STATES

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**I**T requires but a moment's thought to discover that, with more than a hundred million four-footed creatures annually being driven to the shambles of the United States, the amount of needless suffering there endured must many times outweigh the pain inflicted elsewhere upon defenseless animal life.

The need for reform in the methods of slaughter is felt not only by humanitarians in this country, it is growing wherever men and women are hearing the call of a worthier civilization. In England the matter has been forced upon the consideration of Parliament till a commission, appointed by that body, has reported with very positive recommendations in favor of more humane methods. In France, at a recent congress of animal protective societies, resolutions were passed urging upon the state the need of immediate action to change conditions in all French abattoirs. Those familiar with the situation know that for years Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, and Finland have been revolutionizing the whole system of animal slaughter with a view to reducing the sufferings of the animals destroyed.

[ 1 ]

It seems incomprehensible that the societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals in our own land have left this vital question so largely untouched. Yes, I grant we have discussed it, passed resolutions, affirmed that we were about to do something in dead earnest, but there it has ended. No united, resolute, organized action has been taken. We go back from our annual meetings, and once more our local problems engross our attention, and meanwhile the hundred million cattle, sheep, and swine move on night and day to their hells of pain and torture. Yet we exist for their protection, for theirs as well as for that of the horse, the dog, the cat, the bird. Because these latter are daily about us and we see them, they largely monopolize our care. Because we never go to the slaughter-house, never see the look of terror in pleading eyes, are never startled by the gushing streams of hot blood pouring from opened throats, nor hear the dying moans; because we only eat the carcasses of the wretched victims as their flesh comes upon our tables, therefore, "out of sight, out of mind," they are left to their doom.

Few of us apparently realize that no man has the moral right to touch a piece of meat when once his eyes have been opened to the cruelties accompanying the slaughter of food animals, unless he is doing what he can to make those cruelties less. Vegetarian or no vegetarian, I am bound by every principle of justice to see that these lowlier forms of life sacrificed for food are not subjected to a moment's needless pain.



Beyond all this, our societies, knowing as they must of the conditions existing where animals are slaughtered, and knowing how these conditions affect the meat that at last reaches the public, are bound to tell the public what they know. If meat is made unwholesome, if it undergoes toxic changes because of the fright experienced or the sufferings inflicted at the time of slaughter, and no one denies this any longer, then in the interests of the public health, we are under the burden of a heavy obligation to set these facts before an uninformed, often indifferent and unsuspecting public.

### THE SITUATION

Let us look the facts frankly in the face. In spite of nearly fifty years of humane societies in the United States our methods of slaughter are still substantially what they were in the days when men like Henry Bergh and George T. Angell were arousing public attention to the claims of animal life. Our small country slaughter pens, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, are abodes of cruelty, and the majority of them a disgrace to the communities that tolerate them. I do not mean that all butchers are cruel men, or that all small slaughter-houses are equally filthy. I mean simply that the vast majority of butchers are doing just as their fathers did, killing cattle, sheep, and swine under conditions that are outrageously unsanitary and that involve an untold

amount of unnecessary suffering. The larger cattle when felled by ax or hammer are still so handled as to make necessary again and again repeated blows to drop them; sheep, calves, swine, are almost universally strung up by the heels and killed by the knife that is plunged into the throat, left to bleed slowly to death, no attempt having been made to render them unconscious by a blow that would have stunned them before blood was drawn.

If you turn from the small slaughter-house of ten thousand villages and towns to the vast establishments where, by aid of skilfully perfected machinery, animals are rushed by the hundreds an hour from the entrance of the abattoir to the refrigerating rooms, where their steaming carcasses swing down the interminable line, there the same methods with regard to the smaller animals are pursued, and millions of sheep, with what an English laureate speaks of as their "half human bleat," and more millions of calves and swine, linger through moments of dying torment and contortion that might all be saved them had the men and women for whom they die, moved by justice and humanity, demanded that they should have been rendered unconscious before being caught up by the revolving machinery and carried on to face the dripping knife that is driven into their throats.

I shall not discuss the question of how much these sentient creatures realize the meaning of the conditions amid which they perish. Does the sight and smell of blood terrify them? Do the dying struggles

of their fellows which have just preceded them, and which they have witnessed, fill them with some nameless horror? Do the startled eyes, the dilated nostrils, the panting sides indicate anything more than such fear as any strange situation would inspire? Debate that as you will. No man knows what goes on within that brain that has no other means of self-expression than the outward and physical signs of what in men we should call terror and pain. Perhaps it is true that we project too much into the poor dumb creature our own feelings and sensitiveness; still, in the name of common decency, and prompted by the first impulses of humanity, it would seem as if the ordinary human being would feel compelled to cry out against every act and process of the slaughter-house that forces these victims of man's appetite to witness the dying struggles of their fellows, or to meet their own fate under the stress of any needless cruelty or fear.

### THE GOAL

As to the goal to be sought in our efforts at reform there is no room for argument. That goal is as clear as the sun at noonday in a cloudless sky. It is free from complications. It admits of no debate. It is direct and simple. It is this, — *the rendering unconscious by some humane device of every food animal before the drawing of blood.*

In the twentieth century, in a land boasting a

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Christian civilization, one might imagine that to suggest such a reform would be to secure it at once. Indeed, a genuinely civilized Christian from some tropical clime where, as in Ovid's Golden Age, men

"Fed on fruit,  
Nor durst with bloody meals their mouths pollute,"

would wonder that the inhumanities that make such a reform necessary had not long ago been abolished as remnants of a barbarous past. On the contrary, the winning of this goal of which we have spoken will prove to be one of the most difficult tasks to which the humane societies of the new world have ever set their hands.

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## THE OPPOSING FORCES

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### I. THE GREAT PACKING HOUSES

From two sources the opposition will be bitter and persistent. The slaughter of our food animals has become a business of gigantic proportions. Carried on for the most part entirely for the money there is in it, it is managed with as little regard for the sensibilities or capacity for suffering of the animals involved as if they were so many carloads of ore on the way to the smelter. In this business time is money. The delay of a second in transforming each living creature, like a calf or a sheep, into a carcass ready for the market, when these defenseless beings are slaughtered at so many carloads an hour, means dollars cut out of dividends. It is too much to ask the modern packer, who measures success and business skill by the standard of profits, to retard the flow of dollars back into the treasury of his corporation by even a few hours a week out of consideration for anything so trivial as the alleged sufferings of "driven cattle." Against this reform will be marshaled the millions of money invested in vast packing houses and the influence of their opulent officers and stockholders. These forces will confront us in our legislatures. They

will issue orders for our defeat in Congress. I see now a room in a certain state house where at a hearing upon a bill that sought this reform there sat, in a long row over against the two or three champions of the measure, representatives of every packing house in the state and their paid attorneys who sought to thwart the attempts to secure such legislation as would compel the adoption of humane methods in slaughter.

As an illustration of the arrogance and consciousness of power of the great interests arrayed against us, I recall that, at the hearing before the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce relative to the Immature Calf Bill, which was held in Washington in April, 1912, a gentleman from Texas, representing the Cattle Raisers' Association, began his argument against the bill by saying: "I wish first to read a letter from the President of the Association for which I am attorney and in whose behalf I appear."<sup>1</sup> This letter, signed by the President of the Cattle Raisers' Association of Texas, contained these words, "I have just wired Congressman Smith to throttle the bill prohibiting calves under six weeks of age being shipped." Legislation must mean much in any land where any corporation for its own ends can send its orders to Washington to have, independently of its merits, a measure "throttled."

<sup>1</sup> Many of these corporations or associations keep their paid attorneys in Washington during the sitting of Congress, or so long as necessary, to oppose all legislation that might interfere with their business.

How are we to win in this campaign? We have little money at our command. We cannot afford to keep trained lobbyists at Washington. Our appeal must be to the moral sense of the nation. We must create at last, by agitation and discussion, by the repeated rehearsal of the facts in all their brutality, a public opinion that will defy the right of might, and in the name of justice and humanity, stand between the patient victims of the slaughter pen and the vested interests that coin their sufferings into gold.

## II. THE DEFENDERS OF THE HEBREW METHOD

More difficult to overcome perhaps than even the power of these great business corporations will be the opposition that will confront us from a large and growing section of the population who will bar our way to this reform in the name of their religion. I speak here with great reluctance. I have never lifted my hand or voice against any man because of his creed or color or race. Nothing but the imperative call of duty could force me to array myself against a people to which humanity owes so profound a respect and so transcendent an obligation as it does to the people of Israel. The debt of mankind to Judaism can be measured only by the moral grandeur of the faith it has transmitted to our modern world. With every man's hand against him for almost two thousand years, his

treatment by the Christians for centuries the greatest shame of history, the Hebrew has kept his faith, maintained his individuality, and made a name for himself in every realm of life where genius and skill can count.

I shrink from a conflict with the Hebrew. Conscientious as I am that now for thirty years there have arisen occasions when I have stood alone in my defense of his character and his cause, and knowing myself as totally free as a man can be from that prejudice that separates and divides men of different races and creeds, hating and despising this prejudice as I do, I dread more than I can say the accusation of being an anti-Semite, an antagonist of the Jew. What can I do more than to plead with these I would gladly think of as friends, and by whom I would be thought of in the same way, to believe that it is not against them I wage this warfare, but solely against that part of their ritual of slaughter which it is claimed by the more orthodox among them, forbids the stunning of the animal as the very first step in the process of slaughter? I respect their sincerity. I believe they think their method humane, though I am sure but few of them have ever witnessed it.

*"Shechita"*

At the heart of Israel's ancient system of sacrifices lay the teaching that it was the blood that made atonement for the soul. The blood was the life.



This, therefore, the Israelite must not eat. Around this prohibition grew up in later days, and outside their sacred scriptures, a mass of oral tradition prescribing a ritual for slaughter. These traditional laws are embodied in the *Talmud*. In the belief that the blood of the animal would be most perfectly drained from the carcass by casting the victim, raising the hinder part of its body, and then cutting its throat, the strictest and minutest regulations were prescribed governing the process. These regulations persist to the present hour.

When, therefore, in Massachusetts we recently tried to secure the passage of a bill requiring the stunning of all animals before the use of the knife, we were confronted not only by the representatives of the packers, as stated above, but the room was thronged by hundreds of Hebrews, by rabbis clothed in their official vestments, and by Jewish lawyers, and the cry of religious persecution was loudly raised against us. Not even Russia, it was declared, in its hour of bitterest anti-Semitic hate, had dared offer so deadly an affront to the Jewish faith as was now being put upon it in this land of boasted civil and religious liberty.

Since, in this long campaign that is before us, as humane organizations we must meet this determined, and no doubt thoroughly conscientious, opposition based upon religious customs and traditions, I meet it here with arguments that it is my hope will be of service to my fellow-workers who as yet have not

been compelled to give the subject careful study. This opposition must be faced with facts as nearly incontrovertible as possible. The securing of these facts requires months of time and correspondence, and unfortunately for many much of the material comes to them in foreign tongues. What the Massachusetts Society has done in this direction is presented to you here in the conflict that in your several states soon or late you must wage against the method of slaughter known as *Shechita*, a method involving, as I have repeatedly witnessed it, gross and needless cruelties. In the two great abattoirs in London and in several of the largest in our own country, I have watched this method till the assertion that it is preeminently the humane one compels me to offer a most positive denial and protest. It is difficult for me to understand how any man unprejudiced can watch this manner of slaughter without feeling that it is responsible for a vast amount of wholly unnecessary suffering.

First the animal is thrown to the floor by having its feet jerked out from under it (the fall has not infrequently broken its horns or otherwise injured it); then its body is partly hoisted by a chain fastened about a hind ankle, then an appliance is gripped about its muzzle and its head is twisted over until its face is flat against the floor and its neck upturned; then the long knife cuts deep across the throat, and for a space, often running into several minutes, it kicks and plunges in its wild attempts to rise, threshing

about the bloody and slimy floor in its dying agony, — a sight as pitiable and heartrending as one can well endure. That's the Jewish method, described without exaggeration, as I have seen it more than a score of times.

I am not alone in this estimate of the cruelty of the *Shechita*. I have before me as I write, a German pamphlet entitled "Results of the Investigation of the Slaughtering Practise in 585 German Abattoirs." This investigation was made in 1905. To the question as to whether the Jewish method was unnecessarily cruel as compared with the process in which the animal is first stunned, 90.02% of the superintendents of these 585 abattoirs answered, "Yes." Dr. Oscar Schwarz, the author of "Public Abattoirs and Cattle Markets," a large German publication, declares that by the Jewish method a lengthened period of unnecessary torment is caused, a period of sometimes three or four minutes, sometimes three or four times as long, through unskilful treatment of the animals. Dr. Heiss, Abattoir Director of Straubing, Bavaria, says, "We consider the *Shechita* one of the most barbarous methods of slaughter and one which it is our duty to contend against with every means in our power."

Here is also the testimony of Dr. C. Feil, Royal District Veterinarian and Superintendent of the Municipal Stock Yards and Abattoir of Landau: "According to my twenty-five years experience in the slaughter-houses of Speyer, Ludwigshafen, and

Landau, not only the preparation for the *Shechita*, but also the *Shechita* itself must be painful and cruel, and therefore ought to be prohibited by the state."

Dr. Decker, another district veterinarian, says: "In the year 1891, as municipal veterinarian, at the request of the late Dr. Sand, I ascertained for seventy oxen slaughtered at the Stuttgart Abattoirs the duration of the performance of the shochet cut until the suspension of the corneal reflex action. The shortest time was two minutes fifty-two seconds, the longest three minutes thirty-eight seconds. I am therefore of the opinion that killing with shooting or striking mask as against *Shechita* is a humaner method of slaughter. Of this I could convince any layman at any time in any slaughter-house." Hundreds of similar statements made by German veterinarians of long experience I could quote if necessary.

In pamphlet 13, of the publications known as the *Leipzig Opinions*, a document prepared by Doctors Ramdohr and Schwartz, the statement is made that "the directors of slaughter-houses, the men of practical experience, yet almost universally likewise men of scientific education, declare, practically without exception, that the slaughtering according to the Jewish rite, and thus without previous stunning, must be regarded at the present day as an antiquated and cruel method of killing and therefore should be legally prohibited."

With this statement agrees entirely pamphlet Ca. of the publications known as the *Heidelberg Opinions*, which declares that "the overwhelming majority of the 460 veterinarians consulted demanded the legal prohibition of the Jewish method and the legal enforcement of stunning previous to bleeding."

In 1911 the Prussian Society of Veterinarians presented to the German Legislature a petition to the effect that in their judgment "the protection of the Government should not be granted to the slaughtering of cattle after the Jewish ritual, but that all animals should be stunned preceding slaughter."

That it has been legally prohibited in Switzerland is a fact that should not be overlooked.

If it should be objected that these German authorities are biased, that they speak influenced by the prejudice of race, one will scarcely say that of the testimony of the English commission which appears later on in this discussion.

As to the claim that the shochet cut causes speedy unconsciousness by drawing the blood rapidly from the brain, Dr. Winckler says — and many other distinguished German veterinarians confirm his statement, men like Dr. Mittermaier, Prof. Hoffman, Dr. Davids, with whom agreed 96% of the Dutch abattoir superintendents whose opinion was sought, — "The vertebral arteries are not severed by the shochet cut, so that the brain still continues to receive, as long as heart action continues, a sufficient

quantity of blood, so that complete anemia of the brain does not immediately follow the shochet cut." This means that consciousness still continues.

If you want the evidence of your own senses of the cruelty of the *Shechita*, evidence no amount of opinion to the contrary can overthrow, go and witness it yourself. Or, if you think you could not endure the sight, answer the question whether you would prefer being killed by a blow that instantly rendered you unconscious before any knife was thrust into your throat, or, after having been violently thrown to the floor, then partly raised up by a rope or chain about one leg, by having your throat cut and being left to bleed to death.

### *The Real Issue*

The crux of the whole matter lies where the contention is made that by the Jewish method, far more perfectly than by bleeding after stunning, the blood is drained from the body. If this assertion is not in accordance with fact, then there is little reason left why, on a religious ground, the *Shechita* should be perpetuated any longer.

Here fortunately we are not left to the mere *ipse dixit* of him who favors or of him who opposes the method. The results of investigation, the scientific facts, ought to settle the debate. It is true that we have the statement from 90% of the 585 German abattoir superintendents that from their

experience, and these are men of scientific training, they would say that the bleeding was no less thorough when the animal was stunned before slaughter than when it was slaughtered without stunning. But that, we may say, is simply what these men think as the result of long and expert observation. We turn then to the results of that careful scientific experimentation that has been made to determine the actual facts.

The thesis of Josef Kallner, M.D. of Merchingen Baden, gives with great detail the results of his "investigations concerning the condition after bleeding found in connection with various methods of slaughter." His object was to ascertain the percentage of blood contained in the blood vessels of the muscles of animals that have been killed according to the Jewish rite and of such as have been shot. Kallner's investigations followed those of Dr. Goltz which had for their aim the determining of the total quantities of blood left in the carcass after killing by these two methods. Goltz' experiments led him to state that the difference was too slight to be appreciable. Kallner's aim was to discover especially the difference in the amount retained in the muscles. He bases his conclusions on forty experiments on sixteen head of cattle, eight killed by the Jewish method and eight by shooting. His full report is before me as I write.

This is the summarized result of the forty experiments:

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One thousand grams of meat of the *shot* animals contained, when the bleeding was over, 3.94 grams of blood of the blood vessels.

One thousand grams of meat of the animals killed by the *Jewish rite*, 4.74 grams of blood of the blood vessels.

The difference, you see, strictly speaking, is relatively small, yet the muscles of the animals killed by the Jewish method contain a small percentage more.

The results of Goltz' experiments, referred to a moment ago, were that

In the case of cattle having 700 kilograms living weight the loss of blood by the Jewish mode was 22.68 kilos.  
by the shooting mask 22.40 kilos.

In the case of calves of 60 kilograms living weight the loss of blood by the Jewish rite was 2.95 kilos.  
the loss after stunning was 3.04 kilos.

In the case of sheep having a living weight of 50 kilograms the loss of blood by the Jewish method was 2.07 kilos.  
after bleeding with previous stunning 2.17 kilos.

In the *Berlin Veterinary Weekly* of June 11, 1908, page 439, I find the statement that, "according to the report of the city meat inspection for 1906, a comparative test was made at the Berlin Abattoir



of the percentage of blood contained in the meat of cattle killed according to various methods: (1) Without previous stunning. (2) By means of a blow on the head. (3) By means of the Behr shooting apparatus." "It was found that there does not exist an essential difference in the percentage of blood lost of the animals killed according to any of these three methods, but that, nevertheless, the animals first shot and then 'stuck' immediately, would bleed on the whole best, while cattle killed after the Jewish rite would bleed in the least perfect manner."

I grant that Dr. Dembo, the well-known advocate of the *Shechita*, by his experiments on rabbits, claimed to obtain a different result, but slaughtering experiments with rabbits one can well believe can hardly be applied to large domestic animals, particularly when we have the careful statistics to the contrary of men like Goltz, Kallner, and Falk, who dealt with cattle, sheep, and calves killed in the daily routine of the abattoir.

Now if it can be scientifically proved, as I am clear it has been, that by the Jewish rite no more blood is actually drawn from the carcass of the animal than in the case where stunning has immediately preceded the bleeding, then the ground taken by our Jewish friends, that to avoid the eating of blood they must retain their ancient custom, ceases to exist, and their opposition to previous stunning where persisted in is in the face of facts that unprejudiced men cannot ignore.

It is after all only a question of a trifle less or more of blood. The Jewish housewife, after the meat is in her possession, subjects it to certain treatment to extract as far as possible the blood that still remains in it. No one would claim that every particle of blood even then had been eliminated. Do what he may, the Hebrew who eats only kosher meat eats some blood.

*Unfounded Statements*

But beyond such arguments as I have just been dealing with, the man or the society called upon to confront the advocates of the *Shechita* in a legislative hearing will have to meet statements that at the moment he cannot deny unless prepared by the experience of others. For example, at our hearing before the legislative committee in Massachusetts it was affirmed that the Berlin Physiological Society had declared itself in favor of the Jewish method of slaughter. I wrote to the chairman of this Berlin society and this is the reply:

BERLIN, March 27, 1911.

DEAR SIR, — I have never heard of a discussion by the Physiological Society of Berlin of the question of Jewish slaughtering. In any event no resolution has ever been passed with reference to it.

Respectfully,

(Signed)                      EMIL ABDERHOLDEN, *Chairman.*

Again, it was affirmed that the Academy of Medicine, in Paris, had voted its approval of the

*Shechita.* I wrote to the Secretary of the Academy and he sent me the reports for the months of July, August, and October, 1894, containing the material on which the affirmation was based. What were the facts? A Dr. Dieulafoy presented to the Academy a report upon "A work of Dr. Dembo, physician of the Hospital Alexandra at St. Petersburg, relative to a comparative study of the several methods of slaughtering animals." The report was discussed at considerable length and continued at two subsequent meetings, the majority of the speakers opposing from their own experiences the claims of Dr. Dembo as to the humaneness and value of the Jewish rite. At the close of the report, the maker of it made the customary motion, I quote, "That thanks be addressed to Dr. Dembo and that his work be placed in the Archives of the Academy." This proposal, put in the usual form after a report is read upon a book presented to the Academy, as is plain from other similar reports made, was stated to the body and adopted. To say that the Academy of Medicine voted its acceptance of the claims of Dr. Dembo's book is surely misleading.

Again we were informed that the *British Medical Journal* of London, under date of June 9, 1894, also endorsed the Jewish method of slaughter as set forth in Dr. Dembo's book. I asked my friend, Mr. Edward G. Fairholme, Secretary of the Royal S. P. C. A., if he would report to me on the truth of this statement. He replies as follows: "I have

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looked up the references of which you write and find that they are not articles recommending this method, but simply reviews of a certain book written by Dr. Dembo. The editor recommends that medical men should read the book, as it is a scientific description of this method of slaughter."

Still another declaration was made at that hearing that evidently carried great weight with the legislative committee. It was this, that the meat for the German army was from animals killed according to the Jewish rite, since such meat, containing less blood, would keep longer and better. Of course I could not deny the statement. I wrote immediately to the heads of the three divisions of the German army. Here follow the replies:

OFFICE OF THE ROYAL PRUSSIAN SECRETARY OF WAR  
BERLIN, May 12, 1911.

DEAR SIR, — In slaughter-houses where meat is killed for the German army the kosher method is not used. Animals are stunned. In the case of butchers supplying armory kitchens they do not object to their using kosher killed meat, except where the law forbids it.

(Signed)

HOFFMANN.

OFFICE OF THE ROYAL SAXONIAN SECRETARY OF WAR  
DRESDEN, May 24, 1911.

DEAR SIR, — Yours of the 26th received, and in reply I desire to say that the killing of animals in the

German army slaughter-houses is not after the Jewish method. Before the animal is killed it is stunned. It used to be done by giving the animal a very strong blow upon the front of the skull, but since 1906 a shooting apparatus is used.

(Signed)

KÖNIGLICH SÄCHSISCHES KRIEGSMINISTERIUM,  
*Hammer.*

ROYAL WUERTEMBERGIAN SECRETARY OF WAR

STUTTGART, May 23, 1911.

DEAR SIR, — In reply to yours of April 26th I hereby desire to state that the slaughtering in the Saxon army is not done by the Jewish method. Furthermore I wish to state that we do not believe in the Jewish method of slaughtering.

(Signed) WUNDERLICH.

In the light of this correspondence I can understand the statements made to the contrary, only on the ground that those who made them had been sadly misinformed.

*Testimony of English Commission*

Still further, as many of you are aware, some years ago a "Committee on Humane Slaughtering of Animals" was appointed by the British Admiralty to investigate and report. That report, dated 1904, and covering eighty-three closely printed pages of a very large-sized pamphlet, makes as its first recom-

mentation, Appendix p. 10, that: "All animals, without exception, should be stunned, or otherwise rendered unconscious, before blood is drawn." "This," the report continues, "is actually the law in Denmark, many parts of Germany and Switzerland, and therefore cannot be considered an impracticable condition."

With reference to the Jewish method of slaughter the report says, Appendix pp. 10 and 11:

"The Committee have had the advantage of hearing the views of the Chief Rabbi of the Jewish Congregations, as well as of the President of the *Shechita* Board, on this subject, and they have also studied the able treatise prepared by Dr. Dembo in defense of the Jewish system. After the most careful consideration, however, and after receiving the Report of two such eminent physiologists as Sir Michael Foster and Professor Starling, the Committee have been forced to the following conclusions:

"(a) That the Jewish system fails in the primary requirements of rapidity, freedom from unnecessary pain, and instantaneous loss of sensibility, and that it compares very unfavorably with the methods of stunning recommended by the Committee in paragraph 10.

"(b) That the preliminary operations of 'casting' and of forcing the animal's head into position for the cut are difficult, painful, and objectionable from a humanitarian standpoint.

"(c) That the subsequent operation of cutting the

throat is at best an uncertain method of producing immediate loss of sensibility, and frequently causes great and unduly prolonged suffering to the animal.

“(d) That, until some method is devised, and adopted, for rendering the animal unconscious, previous to the ‘casting’ and throat-cutting operations, the Jewish system of slaughtering cattle should not be permitted in any establishment under Government control.”

It should be said also that in the great abattoirs under the control of the British Admiralty where animals are slaughtered for the army and navy, one of which, that at Chatham, I visited last summer, stunning always precedes bleeding, and on the walls of these abattoirs are posted rules governing this matter and the claims of the animal for humane treatment. These rules are worth reproducing here. What a contrast to anything one ever saw posted in a great American abattoir!

“1. All animals awaiting slaughter are to be kept as far as possible from any contact with the sights or smells of the slaughter-house itself.

“2. All animals are to be screened off from their fellows when being slaughtered.

“3. *All animals are to be stunned or otherwise rendered unconscious before blood is drawn.*

“4. Immediately after the removal of each carcass, and before the next animal is brought in, the slaughter chamber is to be thoroughly flushed down and cleansed of all traces of blood.

*“The chief object of the foregoing Regulations is to ensure that animals are spared all unnecessary suffering before death. The strictest care is therefore to be taken to comply with the spirit as well as with the letter of these instructions, and master butchers will be held responsible for their rigid observance.”*

### *Other Phases of the Reform*

How many phases of the subject I have left untouched, only those can appreciate who are familiar with it. I have said nothing of the crying need for the abolition of the private slaughter-house, with its opportunity for cruelty and unsanitary conditions to escape detection. The public abattoir, scientifically constructed, and under state, county, or municipal control, as in Germany, should alone be deemed permissible in a civilized community.

I have made no reference to details in the one great reform, such for example as that, in the rendering unconscious of the animal at the time of slaughter we must seek for this purpose a device that shall be at once humane, simple, inexpensive, capable of rapid operation, and easily manipulated by persons of ordinary strength. Such a device I do not believe has yet been invented. Satisfactory as the present bolt-pistol may be, in countries where they are not so eternally on the run to save each second of time, it will not answer here. In our country an implement must be had, not only satisfactory in other



respects, but one that can destroy at least a dozen animals without being reloaded or cleaned.

I have tried, since this conflict is before the humane societies of the country and all of us must have share in it if we are to be worthy of our trust, to present here, in as brief and condensed a form as possible, some of the results of my own investigations and experiences that they may be of use to my fellow-workers. Any further assistance in this direction that I can ever render will be at their command.

*The Thing to Do*

This last word. How are we most effectively to undertake this reform whose end is national legislation demanding that *all animals, without exception, shall be stunned, or otherwise rendered unconscious before blood is drawn?*

No single society can win this battle. The victory will come only when all the humane organizations of the land are marshaled in a solid phalanx against the opposing forces. It is, therefore, upon this American Humane Association that the duty and the burden of the campaign lies.<sup>1</sup> Suggest whatever methods of procedure seem to you wisest, but as a first step why should not a committee, appointed by this body, and headed by its resolute and able president, lay this whole matter at once before the President of the United States and seek the crea-

<sup>1</sup> This pamphlet was prepared as an address for the national meeting of the American Humane Association.

tion of a commission to inquire into the prevailing methods of slaughter and to make such recommendations to Congress as the facts warrant? Meanwhile, each separate organization in its respective state or community can render this reform no greater service than by agitating in every possible way this urgent question, by keeping it before the public mind by every available means of publicity, while by personal investigation and study its officers fit themselves to enter intelligently and effectively into the hardest struggle with vested interests and religious opposition that has ever engaged the attention of our cause in the United States.

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## APPENDIX

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**J**UST as this pamphlet was going to press I came upon the article which follows, in the *Animals' Guardian*, London, England. It is so pertinent to this discussion that I place it here, by the kind permission of the editor of that excellent magazine. It confirms my own belief that it is a relatively small number of Jews who would insist upon perpetuating this ancient mode of slaughter.

### "SHECHITA"

BY J. H. LEVY

WHAT is *Shechita*? It is the Hebrew word for "slaughter," and technically means the body of doctrine and practise relating to the killing of animals for food, by orthodox Jews. The *ch* in *Shechita* is pronounced as in the German word *buch*, and the vowels as on the Continent; but there is no consistent transliteration of Hebrew in use among Jews. For instance, *trifa* and *kosher* — of which more anon — are pronounced in English fashion, and their transliteration cannot be reconciled with that of *Shechita*. I would transliterate these three words: *sh'hhiytah*, *kasher*, *t'refah*; but I shall employ the transliteration of them in common use among Jews, in this article.

Every diligent reader of the Bible knows that very strict rules were laid down by Ancient Judaism — the Judaism of the Pentateuch and the Temple — as to what might be eaten and what might not. The Eleventh Chapter of Leviticus is entirely devoted to pointing out what may and what may not be used for food, among the beasts, birds, fishes, and creeping things; and the language used is of the most emphatic description. It would be difficult to put into more forcible words the concluding verses of this chapter, which clearly prescribe the strict observance of dietary laws as a condition of holiness.

But this does not stand alone; and the provisions formulated by it are not the only ones which Israelites were expected to observe. The fat of oxen and sheep was also forbidden (Leviticus vii., 23); though I have never come across a Jew, or even heard of one, who, in modern times, eats beef and mutton and abstains on principle from their fat. In Genesis ix., 3-4, every moving thing that lives is given for food to Noah and his descendants; but blood, which is said to be its life, is forbidden. The word *nefesh*, which is here translated “life,” is the same word which is translated “soul” in Genesis ii., 7.

No Israelite was permitted to eat “that which dieth of itself or is torn” — in Hebrew *trifa* — “to defile himself therewith” (Leviticus xxii., 8). In process of time, the meaning of this word *trifa*, torn, has been extended so as to include all proscribed food, the allowed food being denominated *kosher*; and the

tabooed dietary comprises not only all animals and animal products coming within the above prohibitions, but all mammals and birds which are diseased or not killed according to a strictly defined ritual. Among the chief objects of that ritual were and are the avoidance of the slightest maiming or tearing of the flesh of the slaughtered animal, and the rapid bleeding of the animal to death. If, after the animal is killed, a notch be found in the knife with which he was slaughtered, the animal cannot be used as Jewish food; and, *a fortiori*, all animals killed in the chase are forbidden.

Now I do not think there can be any doubt that, over a considerable period, this ritual must have largely tended in a hygienic and humanitarian direction. We must bear in mind that the surging up of consideration for animals in the moral consciousness of mankind is almost altogether a modern development. The Jewish dietary code was at least a recognition that what we eat and drink is not a matter of moral or physiological indifference. I venture to predict that the spirit of that code will survive, whatever change may be necessary in its embodiment; for the dictum that diet and duty are intimately associated is one which no sound moralist would now dispute, and the importance of which is coming more and more to the front.

Jews may, therefore, feel some pride in this matter; and if the time has now come for some modification of, or addition to, their practise, they would do wisely

to take it in good part, to endeavor to keep in the ethical van in this respect, and not to wait till change is forced on them by legislation. Two influences have been at work to alter the relative position of *Shechita*. In the first place, it is the tendency of all ritual to decay, and to shrivel up into dead ceremonial. On the other hand, the technique of slaughter for human food, outside of the Jewish method, has advanced, especially by the use of the stunning instrument, which produces temporary insensibility, during which the animal can be painlessly killed.

The Jewish method (and not this alone) has thus become cruel (because it involves pain which now can be avoided) not so much with regard to the actual killing of the animal, as in getting it into position for slaughter — “casting,” as it is called. It can easily be seen that the throwing down of a spirited ox, in order to cut its throat, may give rise to a contest between man and beast of the most painful description. By the application of the stunning instrument to its head for an instant before the commencement of *Shechita*, this brutal struggle would be avoided, and the slaughter in Jewish fashion would then be unobjectionable, if properly carried out. The use of the stunning instrument should be general, whether the animal is killed by the knife or the pole-axe — whether the animal is an ox, a sheep, or a pig.

What is likely to be the Jewish attitude towards this reform? I believe that, if the Jews of Western

Europe and America could be polled on it, a very large majority would vote in its favor. But this referendum is impossible. As the Rev. Dr. Kohler, the Rabbi of the Temple Beth El of New York, has said: "The great majority of West European Jews have broken away from the dietary laws." But these would probably stand aside, as they usually do on such matters, and leave their race to be represented by its more backward specimens. Of these, some would probably vote for the reform, if it were adequately pressed on them from outside; others would resist to the last. This remnant would consist of two classes: (1) Rabbinical zealots who resist all ritual change, and (2) A few Zionists, whose object is not religious but nationalist. They may be Free-thinkers, like Herzl and Nordau, their most conspicuous leaders; but all ceremonial which segregates Jews from their non-Jewish neighbors, and prevents their social and political assimilation to the peoples among whom they dwell, plays the Zionist game; and they therefore support an extreme orthodoxy whether they feel with it or not.

These two comparatively small classes <sup>1</sup> may be expected to make a show of opposition altogether out of proportion to their numerical strength; but the great body of Israelites will easily be persuaded when once

<sup>1</sup> At the recent Conference of the Central Committee of the Zionist Organization, at Berlin, Herr Adolf Stand said: "Not one per cent. of the Jews in the world are Zionists." But not all even of this minute minority would act as above described.

the Gentile world has been convinced. It is here the real stress lies. The problem is not a Jewish one. Eight years have passed away since our Admiralty Committee reported that "all animals, without exception, should be stunned, or otherwise rendered unconscious, before blood is drawn," and that "in the interests, not only of humanity, but of sanitation, order, and ultimate economy, it is highly desirable that, where circumstances permit, private slaughter-houses should be replaced by public abattoirs." But nothing has been done, because the public conscience has not been aroused on this point. The problem is a much broader one than that of *Shechita*. It is one of the general adoption of humane methods of slaughter, in place of those which are now a disgrace and a demoralization to mankind.

"THE JEWISH CHRONICLE"

The same author, writing in the *Jewish Chronicle* (August 30, 1912), says:

"A mode of slaughter which yesterday was legitimate might today be illegitimate; for so soon as any means is discovered for abolishing any portion of the pain of slaughter, the infliction of that pain becomes unnecessary, and therefore cruel. It is for this reason that the use of the stunning instrument has become imperative. I hope that some of the more enlightened Rabbis will see this, that they will authorize its adoption as a preliminary of *Shechita*,



and that a struggle that is doing vast injury to the Jewish name will thus be ended. The Rabbinical prohibition of anything being done to the 'beast' as a preliminary to *Shechita* was probably intended to prevent any mutilation of the animal precedent to slaughter; and the Rabbis may therefore well authorize the use of the stunning instrument, not only as not coming within the spirit of this prohibition, but as serving to carry out the very object for which this rule was framed."

Mr. Israel Zangwill, the world-famed Jewish novelist, has written to Mr. Levy: "I think you take a very sensible view of the *Shechita* question"; and the Rev. Harry S. Lewis, M.A., Minister of the Congregation of British Jews at Manchester, has written: "May I add a word to express my admiration for your action at the Zurich Congress. The misrepresentations to which you have been exposed will not deceive any persons of good will. As long as animals are killed for food at all, they should be killed with as little pain as possible, all prejudices notwithstanding."

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